

*This is a transcription of episode 10 of Season Two of In the Dark. Italics indicate audio. Musical notations and other production elements aren't included. Because there may be imprecisions in the transcript, the audio should be considered the official record of the episode.*

## Episode 10: Discovery

Previously, on In the Dark.

*Randy Stewart: It was a jigsaw puzzle. They throw the pieces in and they fit. Well, OK, we didn't find the tennis shoes. We found a tennis shoe box, though. The evidence was there. You just had to sit down, listen to it with an open mind, and then come back with your verdict.*

*Kenny Johnson: You know when everyone basically knows the guy's guilty, how much more evidence do you need?*

*Madeleine Baran: So do you remember like telling them like that Curtis wore Filas?*  
*Lawanda Glover: No I did not say that. I put that on my children. I did not say that.*

*Jacqueline Campbell Garron: I don't know anything about no shoes, no murder, no nothing.*

*Madeleine Baran: You never saw him wearing like Filas or anything like that?*  
*Jacqueline Campbell Garron: No.*

*Madeleine Baran: So are you confident that you have the right person, that Curtis Flowers is guilty?*

*Doug Evans: That I will answer. Definitely. No question at all.*

One day a few months ago, I went to see a man named Kenny Townsend. He was a police officer in Winona back in 1996 and he was one of the first people on the scene at Tardy Furniture on the morning of the murders.

Kenny Townsend told me that when he showed up at Tardy Furniture, the only person there was the police chief.

*Kenny Townsend: He was terrified. He was like, 'Draw your weapon. It's the real shit,' you know.*

*Madeleine Baran: That's what he said?*

*Kenny Townsend: Yeah. So, I just walked on in to Tardy casually like I normally do. And that's when he said, 'Draw your gun it's the real shit.' I'm like what? And then I saw the bodies.*

Kenny Townsend was in the store just minutes after the 911 call. He saw the crime scene before anyone had an idea of who had committed the murders. He told me he searched the store. And he stayed at Tardy Furniture for several hours that day.

*Madeleine Baran: Did you like do anything other than that day? Or how involved were you?*

*Kenny Townsend: Not much. I just wrote the report.*

The report. I'd never seen this report. In fact, I'd never seen any police report for the murders at Tardy Furniture. There just wasn't one in the file that the D.A. Doug Evans had turned over to Curtis Flowers' lawyers.

*Madeleine Baran: I haven't seen a report. Where can I get it?*

*Kenny Townsend: I don't know where it is.*

*Madeleine Baran: Really? OK. So you wrote a report that day though?*

*Kenny Townsend: Mm-hmm. But where the report at, I don't know.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK. But you definitely wrote a report?*

*Kenny Townsend: Mm-hmm.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK.*

Kenny Townsend told me that once he wrote that report, it would have gone in a folder about the Tardy Furniture case. As to what happened to it after that, he said he has no idea. Kenny Townsend left the police force about ten years ago.

Over the course of six trials and 21 years, the D.A. Doug Evans has told the court that every last piece of paper, everything he has, the entire investigative file, has been turned over to the defense.

But what Kenny Townsend was telling me was that that wasn't correct. Because he'd written a report and it wasn't in the file.

And what I would come to discover after a year of reporting was that there was a lot more missing from the investigative file than just a police report.

This is Season Two of In the Dark, an investigative podcast from APM Reports. I'm Madeleine Baran. This season is about the case of Curtis Flowers, a black man from a small town in Mississippi who's spent the past 21 years fighting for his life, and a white prosecutor who's spent that same time trying just as hard to execute him.

Certain things were missing from the investigative file in the case of Curtis Flowers. And the reason it matters is because there are rules about this.

There's certain evidence that a prosecutor is required to turn over to a defendant before a criminal trial as part of what's called the discovery process.

And one of the most important kinds of evidence that a prosecutor must turn over to the defense is any evidence that would be favorable to the defense. Like any evidence that would make a jury think the defendant didn't do it. Or any evidence that a witness is lying.

That kind of information is called Brady material. The term comes from a famous U.S. Supreme Court decision called *Brady vs. Maryland*.

And not following this rule, not turning over Brady material, is a big deal. If the defense finds out that the prosecutor withheld Brady material, it can lead a court to overturn the verdict. It can lead to someone going free.

To the court, it doesn't matter whether the prosecutor did it intentionally or whether the prosecutor didn't know that there was something in a police file somewhere that needed to be turned over. If it's not turned over, that's a Brady violation.

We talked about this with a former prosecutor who's now a law professor at Pace University. His name is Bennett Gershman.

And Bennett Gershman said a prosecutor should want to turn over evidence to the defense, even when it makes it harder for the prosecutor to get a conviction, because being a prosecutor isn't supposed to be about winning. It's actually supposed to be about seeking justice.

*Bennett Gershman: You want to play by the rules. You want to do the right thing. The constitutional and ethical rules require you to do this. You're a person of integrity. You know integrity means you do the right thing when nobody's looking. And so you know a prosecutor decided to be a prosecutor knows that he or she is going to exercise enormous power, and with that power comes these responsibilities to make sure that the defendant gets a fair trial.*

There's no one from the court who goes to the D.A.'s office and searches through all the files to make sure that every last piece of Brady material has been turned over. Instead the courts just rely on the prosecutor to do the right thing and turn over Brady material. It basically operates on the honor system.

But some prosecutors have been caught not following this rule. And D.A. Doug Evans is one of them.

It happened in a case that Doug Evans brought against a black man named Bobby Joe Townsend.

*Bobby Joe Townsend: Hello, hello, hello, hey there! Hello, hello!*

*Parker Yesko: Hello!*

*Bobby Joe Townsend: All right.*

*Parker Yesko: Are you Bobby Joe?*

*Bobby Joe Townsend: I'm Bobby.*

*Parker Yesko: I'm Parker. nice to meet you.*

Last fall, our reporter Parker went out to meet Bobby Joe Townsend in Maben, Mississippi, about 40 minutes from Winona. Bobby Joe's wife Vera joined him for the interview.

Back in 1998, Bobby Joe and Vera had five children, and Bobby Joe was working at a nursing home as a housekeeper. He'd had the job for almost 20 years. But then, one day he was arrested and accused of raping an 80-year-old white woman who was a patient at the nursing home.

*Bobby Joe Townsend: Next thing I know, they was taking me to the jailhouse, telling me, 'You know you did it. Why don't you admit it? You did it,' saying that I raped her. And I'm saying, 'What in the world are they talking about?'*

D.A. Doug Evans brought Bobby Joe Townsend to trial on a charge of sexual battery. The trial happened just two months before Doug Evans brought Curtis Flowers to trial for a second time.

There wasn't much evidence against Bobby Joe Townsend. The woman he was accused of raping had severe dementia. She didn't remember being raped and she didn't testify at trial.

Doug Evans' case relied on the testimony of a black woman who said she witnessed the alleged rape. Her name was Lucy O'Briant. Lucy told the jurors that she'd walked in on Bobby Joe Townsend raping the elderly patient in her bed.

That sounded like solid evidence, because Lucy was saying that she witnessed the crime, she was right there. But what Lucy told the jurors she did next was quite odd. She testified that rather than run down the hall and tell her supervisor or call the police, she just told Bobby Joe, quote, "You know better," and that Bobby Joe then stopped and left the room without saying a word.

Lucy testified that the next thing she did was she, quote, "went to the bathroom and got a towel and cleaned her up."

And then Lucy finished her shift and left. She said she waited two days before reporting the alleged rape to police. Lucy told the jurors the reason for the delay was because she was trying to find a specific cop she knew, but he wasn't around, so she just waited until she could find him.

At trial Bobby Joe Townsend testified that he didn't know why Lucy had accused him. But he said, quote, "I know one thing. She don't care too much for me."

We wanted to ask Lucy O'Briant about this, but we weren't able to reach her.

There were some attempts to get forensic evidence in the case. The woman Bobby Joe was accused of raping had been taken to the hospital after Lucy reported it, and had evidence collected as part of a rape kit, to see if Bobby Joe's DNA was there or if there was any other evidence that she'd been raped.

At the time of the trial, according to the case that the D.A. Doug Evans put before the jurors, it wasn't known whether the rape kit had found anything.

A state highway patrol investigator named Stanley Sisk, who testified as a witness for the prosecution, told the jury that he hadn't gotten the results back yet, so he didn't know what it had found.

The jury took less than two hours to convict Bobby Joe Townsend of sexual battery. The judge, Clarence Morgan, the same judge who presided over the earlier Flowers trial, sentenced Bobby Joe Townsend to thirty years in prison.

Bobby Joe and his wife Vera and their young children were given a few minutes after the sentence to say goodbye before Bobby Joe was taken away.

*Vera Townsend: They let him in a room and they let us, they had handcuffed him and he just told me, he said, 'I'm going to prison for something I did not do.' And he said, 'You gonna take care of the kids and everything?' I said, 'Yeah.' I said, 'They gonna be OK,' 'cause I was mostly worried about him 'cause he had broke down and cried. He was crying.*

*Bobby Joe Townsend: It happened so fast and quick, and next thing I know I'm behind bars. They put me in, in prison for life. Thirty years. you know, that was my life there. everything I done worked for in all my life and then, this is happening to me.*

Bobby Joe probably would've stayed in prison for decades were it not for the actions of Bobby Joe's new attorney, because this new attorney questioned whether Doug Evans' office actually had turned over all the Brady evidence in the case like it was supposed to.

The new lawyer was a man named Rob McDuff. Just a note here -- APM Reports hired Rob McDuff to represent us in making requests for public records in Mississippi.

*Rob McDuff: Well, I started looking at the evidence that was presented at the trial where he was convicted, and I was surprised to see that there was no evidence from the crime lab, no evidence from the examination of the rape kit that is routinely taken in sexual assault cases, no evidence from the examination of the woman in the hospital when she*

*was taken there after this rape was reported. And those are things that you normally see in rape cases. So I was very surprised by that.*

Rob McDuff subpoenaed the Mississippi crime lab and he found out that the rape kit actually had been tested. And the results had come back negative, negative for any evidence of rape. Negative for any evidence of Bobby Joe Townsend.

And Rob McDuff also found that a doctor and a nurse who had examined the elderly woman had also written reports that said that they had found no evidence of any kind of injuries to the woman that you would expect to find in a case like this. They found no evidence of rape.

And Rob McDuff found that the investigator who testified under oath knew all of this.

One of the items that the crime lab turned over to McDuff was a phone log. And that log showed that the investigator who testified at trial that he didn't know whether the rape kit had been tested actually had been told on the phone, directly from a person at the crime lab, that the kit had been tested and that the results were negative.

None of that had been disclosed to Bobby Joe Townsend's lawyer before trial.

*Rob McDuff: Once I saw all of this evidence and once the pathologist that I hired reviewed it and concluded that no crime ever occurred, I filed a motion to vacate Mr. Townsend's conviction and give him a new trial so that a jury could hear all of the evidence, including this evidence, this exculpatory evidence, that demonstrated that you know nothing had happened, that this man was not guilty.*

After McDuff proved to the judge that the D.A.'s office had not turned over this information to the defense, this Brady material, the judge overturned Bobby Joe Townsend's conviction. That's how big of a deal it is to find a Brady violation.

Doug Evans decided to try the case again. Only this time, the jury heard all the evidence that Doug Evans' office hadn't turned over in the first trial. And this new jury found Bobby Joe Townsend not guilty. And he was a free man.

Bobby Joe Townsend had spent a year and eight months of his life behind bars, away from his family, convinced he was going to spend basically the rest of his life in prison.

*Vera Townsend: It took something from him, you know. He used to be a happy-go person. He always played with the kids and laughed and joked. And after that, he just got quiet. He just, he just a totally different person now. He's not that same cheerful happy person. It took his life from him.*

*Bobby Joe Townsend: Sometimes I try to forget about it, what has done happened, but sometimes I can be laying in bed, sometimes, and it really do happen to me, you know,*

*what, what happened, you know, what I went through, you know. I just thank the Lord I'm still around.*

After Bobby Joe Townsend got out of prison, the state of Mississippi paid him \$83,000 from a state fund for people who've been wrongfully convicted and imprisoned.

But no one in the D.A.'s office was punished or sanctioned in any way.

And so, even though the Court had found Doug Evans' office withheld evidence, Evans was allowed to keep trying cases, even death penalty cases—like the one against Curtis Flowers, where, once again, Doug Evans would be on the honor system.

In the case of Curtis Flowers, the D.A. Doug Evans has said that he's turned over everything to the defense, the entire investigative file. And that file was almost entirely about Curtis. Almost every document, almost every interview, had to do with Curtis. Those were all the documents I'd read through, the ones that were about people who might have seen Curtis Flowers wearing Fila Grant Hill shoes, people who claimed to have seen Curtis walking around town the morning of the murders, the tests from the crime lab that the D.A. would later use to try to connect Curtis with a possible murder weapon. Almost everything pointed to Curtis.

But as I looked through all these documents, there was this one piece of paper that didn't seem to fit, this one mysterious page. It was from five days after the murders. It was a form that someone had signed at the Winona Police Department. It was a form waiving this person's Miranda rights, saying this person understood that he had a right to an attorney, he had the right to remain silent, and that everything he said could be used against him.

This form is a form the cops use when they're interrogating a suspect. The only other person in the file who'd signed one of those forms was Curtis Flowers.

And there were no notes from this interview, no transcripts, no reports, nothing—just this one piece of paper.

Right when I saw it, I knew it could be important. I made a copy of it and I wrote on it, "who is this person?" And circled my question in pink highlighter. I would end up spending a year trying to find this person, trying to understand what this one piece of paper meant.

That's after the break.

BREAK

This piece of paper that the D.A. Doug Evans had turned over to Curtis' lawyers didn't have much information on it.

It was a form for an interrogation. Two state investigators had signed it saying that the person being questioned had been informed of his Miranda rights.

The form had been signed in the Winona Police Department on July 21, 1996 at 11:20 in the morning. And the person who signed the form waiving his rights was a 24-year-old man with a Memphis address. His name was Willie James Hemphill.

I had no idea who this person was. I'd never heard of Willie James Hemphill. His name wasn't anywhere else in the investigative file. I wanted to know why the cops were questioning him in Winona just five days after the murders. And I wanted to know why there wasn't anything else in the file about it.

I had come across this piece of paper so early in my reporting that I hadn't even read all the trial transcripts yet. But when I did, I found only a few very brief mentions of Willie James Hemphill, and they were all in the sixth trial, the latest one, in 2010.

In that trial, one of Curtis' lawyers asked two investigators about Willie James Hemphill. But the investigators had almost nothing to say about him.

John Johnson, the D.A.'s investigator, told the jury, quote, "I think they talked to him for five minutes, I don't think they learned anything."

The state investigator, Jack Matthews, who was one of the people who'd actually read Hemphill his Miranda rights, said he'd only talked to Hemphill for a quote, "short time" before realizing he didn't know anything. Matthews said he was able to rule him out just by talking to him.

Another lawyer for Curtis, a woman named Alison Steiner, had also asked the D.A. Doug Evans about Willie James Hemphill in a pre-trial hearing.

Doug Evans told the court, "I can't even remember that name."

So Alison Steiner said, "Was this some other case y'all were prosecuting and it just fell behind the wrong file cabinet? Is that a possibility?"

Doug Evans didn't respond to that question. But Evans told Judge Loper, quote, "Anything that we have was furnished." Evans said, "If it's not furnished and listed on the discovery, we have never had it."

And that was the end of it. What the D.A. Doug Evans and the investigators were saying was that whatever it was that had led the cops to Willie James Hemphill, it got cleared up right away.

But these answers that Doug Evans and the investigators gave only made me more interested in what was going on with this interview of this man Willie James Hemphill. It didn't seem plausible that trained state investigators would bring in someone on a quadruple homicide, read

him his rights, and then not take any notes of what he said, and then rule him out based only on a conversation with him. It didn't make any sense.

I wanted to know more about what was going on with Willie James Hemphill, and my next clue was something I found, not in a courthouse, but in a closed down plastics factory on the outskirts of Winona called U.S. Corrulite. A former clerk from one of the courthouses had given us a tip that Montgomery County was storing some of its records there.

But another clerk told us: if you're going to Corrulite, you need to bring a mask.

So I bought four masks and I went to Corrulite with our producers Rehman and Natalie and our reporter Parker.

*Madeleine Baran: It's like this aluminum metal building with no signs on it.*

We walked into the Corrulite factory.

*Madeleine Baran: So this is the old factory.*

There was an aroma of something sharp and unplaceable, like a chemical.

*Parker Yesko: I have gloves, I have face masks.*

The floors were made out of concrete and the ceiling was about two stories high. The first room we walked into was almost empty, except for a few things that people had left there over the years—like a set of old school lockers, some long metal pipes, and a collection of old medical equipment, including several old metal hospital beds with the dirty sheets still on them.

*Madeleine Baran: Oh wow.*

We walked into the next room.

*Natalie Jablonski: Wow.*

This room was just as large.

*Natalie Jablonski: This is a huge room.*

And as we walked in we saw stacks and stacks of rotting cardboard boxes all along the walls on one side. Each box was filled with documents. There were also thousands of documents just lying loose in heaps on the ground, like someone had ransacked the room, thrown everything up in the air and left.

*Madeleine Baran: This is crazy. This is such a nightmare. I mean we're talking about--.*

*Natalie Jablonski: Boxes and boxes and boxes.*

*Madeleine Baran: A hundred piles that are each at least two feet tall, in no organization at all. All of it, I should say all of it, covered in either black mold or mouse droppings or both. This is what happened to the records. They've been literally eaten by mice.*

*Natalie Jablonski: This is terrible.*

*Madeleine Baran: This is not good for us, not good at all.*

There was all kinds of stuff in the Corrulite factory. There were stacks of old red leather-bound books with the records of land deeds, taxes, and criminal cases of Montgomery County, dating as far back as 1871. There were boxes of traffic tickets from the '90s and there were files filled with notes from sheriff's deputies from criminal investigations in the '80s and early '90s.

*Madeleine Baran: Candy theft.*

*Natalie Jablonski: No.*

*Madeleine Baran: Specifically – (reading) "Upon arriving I found that the candy machine had been broken into. The peanut rolls and the Snicker bars had been removed from the machine. The machine door had been pried open. I never could find how and where entry had been gained."*

*Natalie Jablonski: Wait, they investigated this?*

*Madeleine Baran: So – (reading) "Items recovered, four bags of M&Ms and two bars of candy."*

Against a wall was a short metal filing cabinet with fourteen drawers. Inside were thousands of index cards. They were booking records for the local jail. Many of them were covered in mold.

There were so many cards, with so many names on them. It wasn't clear if any of them had anything to do with the investigation of the murders at Tardy Furniture, but we didn't want to overlook anything, so we decided to take a photo of each one of them. We set up a table in the middle of the room, and all four of us started taking photos with our phones.

It wound up taking us days, but eventually we'd taken a photo of each one of the booking cards — all 8,014 of them.

We were taking photos so quickly that we didn't have time to read the cards inside Corrulite. So it wasn't until later that we realized that one of those cards was a jail record for Willie James Hemphill.

The booking card had Willie James Hemphill's Social Security number and birthdate, and it listed a Memphis address.

And the day he'd been booked into jail was the same day that he'd signed away his Miranda rights in the Winona Police Department, July 21st, 1996.

He was booked in at 4:15 a.m., and seven hours later, he was sitting in a room with Wayne Miller and Jack Matthews.

The booking card didn't say what happened next. The parts of the form for the date and time the inmate was released had been left blank.

But this card was proof that Willie James Hemphill hadn't just been questioned. He'd been arrested.

To figure out what was going on with Willie James Hemphill I needed to find him. But no one I knew in Winona had ever heard of him.

So I went online and I searched for anyone with the name Willie James Hemphill, who lived in this part of Mississippi. And I found someone, a Willie James Hemphill who lived a few towns over.

And so, one evening last fall, I drove out with our producer Samara to talk to him.

The house where Willie James Hemphill lived was in the Delta, about 30 minutes west of Winona. And as we drove out there, the ground flattened and got lower, and we started to pass field after field of white cotton stretching back as far as we could see. As we drove, the sun set.

We turned onto a long gravel driveway that led to Willie James Hemphill's house. The house is a white trailer in a field set back from the road. By the time we got out of the car it was dark, and the sky was filled with stars. The crickets were buzzing. Some kids were playing in the yard. A man was outside working on an old truck. He had the radio turned up.

*Madeleine Baran: Are you Willie James Hemphill?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yes, I am.*

*Madeleine Baran: Hi, I'm Madeleine. This is Samara.*

*Samara Freemark: Nice to meet you, hey.*

*Willie James Hemphill: My hand's a little oily.*

*Samara Freemark: Oh, that's all right. You working on your truck?*

*Madeleine Baran: We're radio reporters and we were stopping by because we've been reporting on something that I don't even know if you remember at all which is the Curtis Flowers case.*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yes, that was years ago. The fellow that did the furniture thing, right?*

*Madeleine Baran: Right. Yeah. And we came across like a sheet of paper in the investigative file for Curtis' case. And it has your name on it. And I don't know.*

*Willie James Hemphill: But that wasn't me.*

*Madeleine Baran: Oh, OK. Is it this—are you that Willie James Hemphill?*

*Willie James Hemphill: No. That's my cousin.*

Willie James Hemphill went to turn off the radio. Then he came back over.

*Willie James Hemphill: You threw me off. What did you expect to find?*

*Samara Freemark: I expected to find the other Willie Hemphill.*

*Willie James Hemphill: I ain't him. You were looking for the duplicate. I'm the original.*

This Willie James Hemphill told me that actually, he's been through this before, getting confused with another Willie James Hemphill. He said it happened back in 1996, right after the murders at Tardy Furniture. And the people who came down his driveway back then weren't reporters. They were cops.

*Willie James Hemphill: This is not the first time that I've had to deal with that episode. Because when it first happened, I mean I had a yard full of Carroll County sheriffs, Montgomery sheriffs, because we have basically the same name. Willie James Hemphill, you know. And so they thought it was me. It wasn't me. I know nothing.*

*Madeleine Baran: So they came here?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yeah.*

*Madeleine Baran: It was like Carroll County sheriff's deputies like riding down here?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yeah.*

*Madeleine Baran: Like how many?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Well it was three cars. I know it was three cars.*

What this Willie James Hemphill was describing was completely new to me. Deputies in squad cars, driving through the Delta, on a hunt for a man named Willie James Hemphill. There was certainly no record of any of that in the investigative file that the D.A. Doug Evans had turned over to Curtis' lawyers.

*Samara Freemark: So they were trying to figure out if you were the right Willie James. What kind of questions did they ask that made them realize that you were the wrong Willie James Hemphill?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Well I think the biggest thing was when they asked me, was I in that area when this took place. And when I established that, no, I was here, and you know I had proof that I was here because - excuse me - I was at work and they were like oh, OK. You couldn't have been at work and up there too, so. You know, I think that was the biggest thing. And then so I showed them my ID and told them about where I worked at. They verified all of that. And it was over.*

Willie James Hemphill told us that his guess is that the Willie James Hemphill that law enforcement had been looking for was his cousin Willie James Hemphill. But he said, he's not sure because he's never actually asked his cousin about it.

*Willie James Hemphill: I mean we thought it was strange, you know, but our family's like this. What you do, that's your business. If you go out there and you sell marijuana, that's*

*your business because that's your life. You know the consequences. You grown. So we questioned maybe two or three questions among ourselves. And everybody probably reached in the cooler, got another beer or got another drink of Hennessy and said, 'Oh well.' And kept going on. Because that's just the way we look at it. I mean when you start trying to figure out why people do things for what reason, you give yourself stress and a headache.*

I asked him how to get in touch with his cousin.

*Willie James Hemphill: [sigh] That going to be a tough one. Um...how to catch up with him? I don't know. I don't even have his phone number. Like I said, when we communicate it's basically over Facebook, you know. And, but that's basically it.*

It was getting late. Willie James Hemphill's wife was almost done cooking dinner.

*Willie James Hemphill: Ooh, I heard her bump that skillet three times. She's getting close.*

And so, we said goodnight to this wrong Hemphill and drove off.

I tried messaging the cousin on Facebook. But what I didn't realize was that my search for the right Willie James Hemphill was only just beginning.

*Madeleine Baran: A while ago I had decided to message the other Willie James Hemphill. So it looks like he wrote me back.*

*Samara Freemark: What did he say?*

*Madeleine Baran: He says I think you may still have the wrong Willie Hemphill. Willie J. Hemphill is my nephew and currently live in Chicago.*

*Samara Freemark: It's like a house of mirrors of Willie James Hemphills.*

We found a Willie James Hemphill in Chicago on Facebook. We watched a bunch of Facebook Live videos he'd recorded.

*Madeleine Baran: He was live November 9th at 11:20 p.m.*

*Video: Willie James Hemphill: Just got off work.*

*Madeleine Baran: He's got a hairnet on.*

*Video: Willie James Hemphill: What's poppin' Facebook?*

This Willie James Hemphill was a very bored Willie James Hemphill, looking for someone to chat him up on Facebook. He recorded one video in the backseat of his car after work. He called it Backseat Chronicles.

*Video: Willie James Hemphill: I'm gonna be in the backseat!*

*Madeleine Baran: He wants to be in the backseat.*

*Video: Willie James Hemphill: I just hit something. I just hit some shit. I can't see nothing in these fucking (unintelligible).*

*Madeleine Baran: Oh, no.*

*Video: Willie James Hemphill: Backseat Chronicles. Holla at your boy. Talk to me. I'm in the backseat. Backseat Chronicles.*

I sent this Backseat Chronicles Willie James Hemphill a message, and he called me right away. We talked, but sadly he was also not the right Hemphill.

I kept going.

*Madeleine Baran: 'Sorry, but I couldn't tell you who that might be. That name is well used in that area. LOL. Have fun.' OK, that is the sixth Willie James Hemphill.*

A lot of these Willie James Hemphills would lead me to another Willie James Hemphill.

*Madeleine Baran: He has a relative who now is living near a military base. Talked to that guy. That guy has a relative who's also Willie James Hemphill. That guy is too young. Talked to all three in this line of succession of Willie James Hemphills. All of them wrong, all of them time consuming.*

None of these Willie James Hemphills was the right one.

The Willie James Hemphill I was looking for was 24 years old when he was questioned by the investigators. And according to that form he lived in Memphis at the time. But for some reason, he was down in Winona, Mississippi on July 21st, 1996, five days after the murders at Tardy Furniture.

I started expanding my search. I started going to every address I could find that had ever been associated with anyone with the last name of Hemphill—not just in Winona, but all over this part of Mississippi.

And then one day I went with our producer Rehman to an address I'd found in the town of Kilmichael, about 20 minutes away, that looked like it used to be where a Hemphill lived. A woman answered the door.

*Madeleine Baran: We were just stopping by 'cause we were trying to find a guy named Willie James Hemphill?*

*Libby Flowers: That's my nephew.*

*Madeleine Baran: Oh, OK.*

*Libby Flowers: He's not here.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK. Did he ever live in Winona?*

*Libby Flowers: Mm hmm.*

*Madeleine Baran: He did? OK.*

*Madeleine Baran: Do you know like when he lived in Winona?*

*Libby Flowers: Woo. I know it's been at least, what, twenty years ago?*

*Madeleine Baran: OK, all right. And did he ever live in Memphis?*

*Libby Flowers: Uh huh.*

*Madeleine Baran: That is the Willie James Hemphill then.*

*Libby Flowers: I'm telling you that's the one you're looking for!*

*Madeleine Baran: That's the right one!*

I had spent months trying to find the right Willie James Hemphill, and finally it seemed like I was on to something, because this Willie James Hemphill — according to this woman Libby — had lived in Memphis and was living in Winona off and on back in 1996, around the time of the Tardy murders.

*Madeleine Baran: Did he work downtown or something?*

*Libby Flowers: No, he wasn't working down there, but he had a grandmother that lived over there, so he was in the vicinity.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK.*

*Libby Flowers: So he was close in the vicinity of it.*

*Madeleine Baran: Yeah. But he was living in Memphis?*

*Libby Flowers: He mighta' been in Mississippi when that happened.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK.*

*Libby Flowers: 'Cause he lived in both places.*

*Madeleine Baran: Oh OK.*

*Libby Flowers: He lived down here and he lived up there.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK.*

*Libby Flowers: So he was bouncing around.*

*Madeleine Baran: Got it.*

*Libby Flowers: Just a young person, you know how young people do it. They'll live here a while. 'I'd a got in trouble so let me go down here.' mm hmm. He was sorta rowdy back then. He might've just been in jail and they talked to him 'cause he was rowdy back then.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK. Like in Winona?*

*Libby Flowers: Mm hmm. He mighta been one of the ones that they, they talked to when he was locked up 'cause he had one of them tempers and somebody said something to him he didn't like, he was ready to jump, so that mighta been what it was.*

*Madeleine Baran: But that's him.*

*Libby Flowers: That's him.*

*Madeleine Baran: All right.*

*Libby Flowers: That's your Willie James.*

*Madeleine Baran: Great.*

*Libby Flowers: (laughs)*

*Madeleine Baran: Well, thank you so much.*

*Libby Flowers: No problem, baby. Y'all have a good safe trip.*

*Madeleine Baran: Thank you so much.*

*Libby Flowers: And I'm glad to be able to help y'all, but if you looking for Willie James from Winona, that's gonna be him.*

*Madeleine Baran: All right.*

*Libby Flowers: All right there, baby, y'all take care.*

*Madeleine Baran: Thank you so much.*

*Libby Flowers: All right.*

*Madeleine Baran: Thanks!*

Unfortunately, Libby didn't have a phone number for her nephew Willie James Hemphill. But from talking to her I learned that he might have lived in Indianapolis at one point, in Marion County, Indiana. So I started looking for him there.

*Madeleine Baran: OK, here's the Marion County Jail website. Search for inmates. I'll just put Hemphill. [typing] Search. Whoa. There's a lot of Hemphills. There's so many they don't all fit on one page. OK, this goes up to--Oh, OK, not only is he in here, he's in here--it's all him. 1,2,3,4...*

I started calling other county jails in Indiana.

*(Phone rings)*

*Man at the jail: (unintelligible) jail. Can I help you?*

*Madeleine Baran: Hi, I was calling to see if there's a way to go about checking to see whether someone was in the jail in the past?*

*Man: What's the last name?*

*Madeleine Baran: Sure, it's Hemphill.*

*Man: First name.*

*Madeleine Baran: Willie.*

*Man: Yes.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK. How many times are we talking about?*

*Man: Twelve.*

*Madeleine Baran: Twelve. Wow. Was he in there recently?*

*Man: 2016.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK.*

We got more information from that jail, and I went searching for any other criminal records Willie James Hemphill might have had in Indiana, Memphis, and Mississippi. Because maybe this could help us figure out not only where Hemphill could be living now, but also why the cops were interested in him back then.

And from the records we found, it was clear that Willie James Hemphill was a violent person.

Back in the '90s, before the murders at Tardy Furniture, Hemphill had been arrested many times, both in Winona and in Memphis.

In 1990, he was arrested for sneaking up on a woman on a street in Memphis in the middle of the day and taking her purse. He jumped into a drainage ditch to escape. But he was chased down by a cop and arrested and sentenced to almost a year's probation.

In 1991, he was arrested for putting a gun to a woman's head in a parking lot in Memphis, smacking her across the head with it, and stealing her purse.

By the summer of 1996, the summer of the murders at Tardy Furniture, Willie James Hemphill was back in Winona. I talked to a woman who dated him back then, and she told me that she and Hemphill lived together in a little house across the train tracks from Tardy Furniture, about three blocks or so from the store. Court records from the '90s also say Hemphill lived on that street.

In the years after the murders at Tardy Furniture Hemphill kept getting arrested. And his crimes became more violent.

In 2000, he was arrested in Memphis for beating and choking his new girlfriend, and he pleaded guilty to assault. That same girlfriend later accused Hemphill of stabbing her with a box cutter. We found there's even still an outstanding warrant for his arrest in Memphis for aggravated assault.

Eventually, Willie James Hemphill moved to Indiana. In 2004, he was arrested for severely beating another girlfriend. He hit her with a four-foot-long pipe. It happened at the woman's house, while her young children were upstairs. One of them, a 12-year-old girl, called the police. But Hemphill realized what she was doing and yanked the phone cord out of the phone. The girl tried to hide in the bathroom, and she screamed at Hemphill that her mother was not going to die like this, and Hemphill told her that he was going to pour lighter fluid on her mom and blow up the entire house. The 12-year-old girl climbed out of the bathroom window and jumped down, and ran to a neighbor's house to call the police. When police got to the house there was blood everywhere, but the woman was still alive.

By the time we had pieced this all together, Willie James Hemphill was out of jail, presumably living somewhere in Indiana. The last arrest we found was in September of 2017 for dealing marijuana. But I didn't know where he lived. And I wasn't sure it would be safe to just show up, given his violent criminal record.

But then, just a few weeks ago, we were looking online, checking Indiana jail bookings for Willie James Hemphill — something we did all the time — and our producer Natalie saw that Willie James Hemphill had just been arrested and was sitting in an Indianapolis jail right then. And had a court date scheduled for Wednesday, June 13. I immediately booked plane tickets to go to Indianapolis to try to talk with him with our reporter Parker.

I wanted to find out from Hemphill himself why the cops had suspected him, and how he came to be talking to them in the first place, five days after the murders. At trial investigators said the

whole conversation with Hemphill was really brief, like a few minutes, and that Hemphill had been ruled out just by talking to him.

So that would mean the cops didn't collect any evidence from Hemphill and they didn't even really investigate him, that probably they had no good reason to suspect him in the first place. It was just some random thing that they didn't bother documenting, so there was nothing that needed to be turned over to Curtis' lawyers, other than that one piece of paper that Hemphill had signed waiving his Miranda rights.

That's what the jurors heard. I wanted to know if it was true.

We got into Indianapolis at two in the morning the night before the court hearing. That next morning, we woke up early to get to the courthouse to figure out the logistics. Willie James Hemphill was listed as being in custody, so we had to figure out a way to somehow talk to him during this hearing or when he was being led into the courtroom or out of it.

*Parker Yesko: Testing, testing. OK.*

*Madeleine Baran: So. We're in Indianapolis. We're in a parking lot. And we are maybe in the next hour, we're going to talk to Willie James Hemphill, finally. Or not.*

Willie James Hemphill was scheduled for court at 1:30 in the afternoon. About twenty other people were also scheduled for court at the same time.

Parker and I went into the courtroom. The courtroom was small and cramped. There were only two rows of benches in the back. We turned to sit down, and that's when we realized, that sitting there on the bench, about fifteen feet away from us, was Willie James Hemphill.

He wasn't handcuffed or wearing a jail uniform. He was just sitting there with his wife. So we sat down a few feet away, and a minute or two later both of them got up and left. So we followed them. And we realized that they were just going to the bathroom, so we waited in the hallway outside for Willie James Hemphill to walk by.

And when he did, I stepped forward and introduced myself.

*Madeleine Baran: Hi, sorry to bug you, are you Willie Hemphill?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yes.*

*Madeleine Baran: Oh hi, great to meet you. I'm Madeleine.*

We sat down in a little seating area around the corner from the elevator on the fourth floor of the courthouse. Willie James Hemphill was wearing jeans, Nike Air Max shoes, and a grey Roca Wear t-shirt.

*Madeleine Baran: Yeah. We've been down there reporting on the Curtis Flowers case.*

*Willie James Hemphill: OK. Yeah, they actually had me as a suspect in that.*

*Madeleine Baran: They did?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yeah.*

I'd been talking to Willie James Hemphill for less than a minute, and already he'd told me, 'I was a suspect' in the murders at Tardy Furniture.

*Willie James Hemphill: I gotta make sure I don't miss my court date.*

*Madeleine Baran: I'm sorry, yeah. Can we talk after?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Sure.*

We all went back into the courtroom. And we watched as Hemphill's lawyer tried to get a marijuana charge against Hemphill dismissed. The judge set another hearing, and his court date was over.

As we went out, I asked Willie James Hemphill if we could talk some more. He said OK, but he had to get back to the jail where he was in a work release program, so we made plans to talk there.

Two days later, we met up with Hemphill again, this time at the jail. We were led into a big empty classroom and a guard brought Hemphill in.

I asked Willie James Hemphill to take me through the story: how he'd ended up in the police station, what they talked about, and why they let him go.

Hemphill told me that one day, he thinks it was a day or two after the murders at Tardy Furniture, he was driving back to Winona from an amusement park in Memphis, when his step-father called him and told him that the cops were looking for him.

Like, really looking for him — carloads of cops descending on his parent's house. He said maybe some of them were even FBI agents. We actually talked to Hemphill's mother a few days ago and she told us that yes, six officers had come to her door, looking for her son. She said she doesn't think any of them were from the FBI. But she said, it was serious.

*Willie James Hemphill: My mom, my stepdad, were afraid that, hey, if they're manhunting me like that, they may shoot me down in the street. So, I was told to report to the nearest sheriff's department or take a chance of being shot down, basically. So I was like OK, OK, you know.*

Willie James Hemphill said he turned himself in to the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. But he said, he didn't do it right away.

*Willie James Hemphill: I think it was maybe two days later that I actually walked into the sheriff's department and said, "Hey, I'm Willie Hemphill." And they immediately cuffed me, and they came and questioned me.*

Hemphill told me the investigators hadn't brought him in there to question him about other suspects. And they didn't offer him a deal if he helped them get information on someone else.

Willie James Hemphill told me that the investigators were clear, that they suspected him of the murders at Tardy Furniture, but he denied it.

*Madeleine Baran: What did they ask you about?*

*Willie James Hemphill: My whereabouts, basically, and if I had any knowledge of it, which I didn't, so.*

*Madeleine Baran: Did they bring up Curtis at all?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Actually, they didn't. So they didn't bring up anybody else.*

*Madeleine Baran: So they were saying, you're a suspect. Like, that's—I mean it was clear that that's what they were saying to you.*

*Willie James Hemphill: Oh, yes.*

Hemphill said the investigators told him that several people had seen him downtown, near Tardy Furniture, around the time of the murders.

*Willie James Hemphill: They said, 'Witnesses placed you in the area,' but they never said who.*

*Madeleine Baran: Like in the area like downtown or something?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Evidently. They was like, 'We got some, you know, we got someone placing you there. You can stop lying.' I can remember statements and questions like that, 'You can stop lying. We got someone places you there, and this and that, or in the area or on the scene.' But no.*

*Madeleine Baran: Like placing you in the store or something?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Not in the store, maybe on Front Street somewhere. But I'm pretty sure that the day when that went down I was nowhere in town.*

Willie James Hemphill told me that the investigators asked him where he was at the time of the murders.

*Willie James Hemphill: Basically, I was out of the whole jurisdiction. I was nowhere around.*

He said he told the investigators that on July 16, 1996 he was up in Memphis, two hours away, shopping at a mall with a woman he knew.

Hemphill told me he doesn't know if the investigators actually checked his alibi.

At trial, state investigator Jack Matthews told the jury that he actually did not check Hemphill's alibi. He ruled him out by conversation alone. Matthews told the jury, quote, "I think we pretty much ruled him out from the get-go."

Willie James Hemphill gave us the names of two people he said might remember that he was at the mall in Memphis that day. One of them is dead. The other, the woman he says he went to the mall with, didn't return our calls.

Hemphill told me there was another reason that the investigators suspected him of killing the people at Tardy Furniture. And this reason had to do with the forensic evidence in the case. Hemphill had first mentioned this to me at the courthouse.

*Willie James Hemphill: I was told that the brand of shoe I was wearing was a connection.*

*Madeleine Baran: Which was which kind of shoe?*

*Willie Hemphill: A Grant Hill Fila.*

A Grant Hill Fila. Hemphill told me that when he walked into the sheriff's office to turn himself in, he was wearing Fila Grant Hill shoes. The exact kind of shoe that investigators determined had made the bloody shoe prints inside Tardy Furniture.

*Willie Hemphill: I'm not rich, I only had one pair of shoes. Yes. They maybe, probably tried to match em to the actual—I was told that there was a bloodstain with a shoe print. So besides that, I don't know.*

The jurors at the trials of Curtis Flowers had only heard of one suspect who could have worn Fila Grant Hills: Curtis Flowers. Even though it wasn't at all proven that Curtis wore Fila Grant Hills in the first place. Investigators never found the shoes they claimed Curtis wore and Curtis had denied having Filas. The closest the investigators got was an empty shoebox found in Curtis' girlfriend's house, that the girlfriend said belonged to her son.

But at trial, there were no other people accused of wearing Fila Grant Hills. So at trial, to the jurors, it seemed as though the shoeprint evidence could only point toward Curtis.

But according to Willie James Hemphill, there was another suspect who definitely wore Grant Hill Filas. And that suspect was him.

Hemphill said that the investigators told him they already knew that he wore Filas, because someone — they wouldn't say who — had reported him as wearing them.

*Willie James Hemphill: Somebody knew that I had Filas, because that was the big thing was that I had a pair of Grant Hill Filas and a lot of people didn't have them. And I think that was, that was like the shoes was the main thing that they try to connect me with.*

*Madeleine Baran: Do you remember what size Fila shoe you had?*

*Willie James Hemphill: No. Probably, maybe a nine or ten. But now it's twelves and thirteens, so I can't be for sure.*

Willie James Hemphill was telling us that back in 1996, his shoe size was maybe a nine or ten. And that was pretty close to the size shoe that Doug Evans has said in trial made the bloody shoe prints at Tardy Furniture. Evans had said those prints were made by a size ten and a half.

Hemphill told me that the investigators were so interested in his shoes, in these Fila Grant Hills that he'd walked in wearing, that they asked him to take them off his feet.

*Willie James Hemphill: They took them for a small amount of time. They ended up giving them back. So I don't know what they did with them.*

*Madeleine Baran: Like for a couple minutes or something?*

*Willie James Hemphill: I'd say more than a few minutes, you know.*

*Madeleine Baran: Did they tell you—. Did they like straight up tell you why they were interested in your shoes?*

*Willie James Hemphill: He said it was some prints left inside the store. And I mean I guess they was trying to match.*

Hemphill told me that the investigators collected other evidence from him too. He said they took his fingerprints and that they even waved some kind of light over his hands.

And Hemphill said, all of this should be documented somewhere, because the investigators had a tape recorder that was recording the whole thing, and he said they took notes, too.

*Willie James Hemphill: They recorded it and I'm thinking it was two or three hours.*

*Madeleine Baran: One of them testifies it was like five minutes.*

*Willie James Hemphill: Five minutes? No. That wouldn't have been enough time to even check my shoes. It was definitely more than five minutes that they talked to me. It took, hell, it take five minutes to read me my Miranda rights and have me sign papers and set up the recording, the tape recorder. That takes five minutes.*

What Willie James Hemphill was saying was that not only was he a suspect, but that the investigators had collected evidence on him. They'd booked him into jail. They'd recorded the interrogation. They'd fingerprinted him. They'd even taken his Fila Grant Hill shoes for some time.

And from what Hemphill was telling me, the investigators didn't appear to rule him out right away, because, he said, that after the investigators did all of this, after they questioned him about his alibi, and took his shoes, and got his fingerprints, they did not let him out of jail. Hemphill told me he was held in jail for a while, not just a night or two. He said the reason they were able to hold him for so long was because he had a lot of unpaid fines.

I tried to check this. But the jail where Hemphill stayed has been demolished. But just four days ago the sheriff of Montgomery County responded to a public records request we'd sent him, and he told us that his records showed that Hemphill was in jail for 11 days, from July 21, 1996 to

August 1. The sheriff said his records didn't say why, just that Hemphill had a warrant out for him in the city of Winona.

Willie James Hemphill was describing a parallel investigation. There was the investigation of Curtis Flowers and there was the investigation of him. With Curtis Flowers, when the cops were looking for him on the day of the murders, they just showed up in one squad car and knocked on Curtis' door, and he agreed to come with them down to the station.

When the cops were looking for Willie James Hemphill, the search was much more aggressive. It was a manhunt: officers in squad cars roaming the Mississippi Delta, authorities up in Memphis pounding on his mother's door.

According to Hemphill, the cops told him the reason they were doing this was because witnesses had placed him on Front Street on the morning of the murders, so close to Tardy Furniture. And because witnesses had told the investigators that Hemphill wore Fila Grant Hill shoes, in a case where one of the few pieces of forensic evidence was a set of bloody shoe prints made by Fila Grant Hills found inside Tardy Furniture on the morning of the murders.

And yet, there was only one piece of paper about Hemphill in the file that the D.A. Doug Evans had turned over to Curtis' lawyers.

Willie James Hemphill could be making up the story of what happened after he was arrested. But if he's telling the truth, you'd expect to see records in the file that aren't there.

Those reports from people Hemphill said the investigators told him had seen him near Tardy Furniture on the morning of the murders. There was no record of that in the file.

Or the fact that Hemphill said he walked into the sheriff's office wearing Fila Grant Hill shoes. There was no record of that in the file.

Hemphill said the investigators had even taken those shoes for some time. There was no record of that in the file.

He said they'd taken his fingerprints. No record of that in the file.

Hemphill had told me that the interrogation had been recorded, that the investigators had also taken notes. None of that was in the file.

And there was the fact that Hemphill had been held in jail for 11 days. That wasn't in the file either.

And this kind of material would have been critical information, because it would have been evidence that the investigators were not just focused on Curtis Flowers, that in those early days

after the murders, they thought that there might be evidence pointing toward this guy, Willie James Hemphill.

Hemphill told us that no one had talked to him about any of this since then. We were the first people to ask him about it.

*Madeleine Baran: So no defense lawyer has ever asked you anything about this?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Never.*

*Madeleine Baran: Does that surprise you?*

*Willie James Hemphill: Yes, because usually reasonable doubt is always looked for, and having another suspect is definitely could create some reasonable doubt. It was –like I said, I was I was like day one, second day, like, 'Hey, you're a prime suspect.' And for now to be so sure that it was Curtis, that just baffles me.*

I talked to Willie James Hemphill for three hours that day. And his version of what had happened, when the investigators questioned him, contradicted the sworn testimony of state investigator Jack Matthews, the D.A.'s investigator John Johnson, and the statement that the D.A. Doug Evans himself had made to the court.

I wanted to talk to Doug Evans and John Johnson about this, but they didn't respond to my interview requests on Hemphill. I also reached out to Jack Matthews and Wayne Miller, the two state investigators who questioned Hemphill. Jack Matthews never responded. Wayne Miller told me he didn't want to talk about the Flowers case.

*Wayne Miller: Uh-huh. Yes, I knew you was getting to that. I knew that's what this whole thing was about. And I will not make any kind of comment on that, because we have—I have people call me all the time, and I'm going to do you just like I do them: no comment.*

*Madeleine Baran: OK. And how come?*

*Wayne Miller: It's still in litigation. It's still before the Supreme Court or whatever rulings they're doing and all that.*

I don't know what Curtis' lawyers will make of what we've found out about Willie James Hemphill. I've offered to go through our findings with them, provided that it's on the record as part of an interview. But they've declined.

But our producer Natalie did run this by Bennett Gershman, the law professor who's an expert on Brady.

*Natalie Jablonski: There's another person whose name comes up in the sixth trial and law enforcement says like well we spent like five minutes looking at him but ruled him out. But if it turns out that like they actually did look really intently at him. Would that, would that matter, would that be—?*

*Bennett Gershman: Yeah, yeah it would matter. That would show that they're misleading.*

Natalie also asked Bennett Gershman whether it would be a Brady violation if investigators had collected evidence from Hemphill, like his shoes and his fingerprints, and it hadn't been disclosed to the defense.

*Bennett Gershman: Of course it is. Is this evidence that might be important in terms of the jury's evaluation of the defendant's guilt. Of course it is.*

Bennett Gershman said that if all this evidence existed and had been withheld, it could help get Curtis Flowers a new trial.

In a hearing before Curtis Flowers' sixth trial, Judge Loper asked the D.A. Doug Evans a question. "Do I have the State's assurance that everything you have had in your possession from an investigative standpoint in this case has been provided?"

Doug Evans said, "Yes, sir. Everything."

Judge Loper said that was all he needed to know. He said, quote, "I have got Mr. Evans' assurance on his oath as a licensed attorney in the state of Mississippi and under sanction if he didn't provide it because the bar would sanction him if he's made some statement to the Court that was not true."

But Judge Loper did ask one more question, just to be sure.

Judge Loper asked Doug Evans, "Has the State got any exculpatory evidence?"

Doug Evans said, "No sir."

Loper said, "Or have you ever had any that has not been provided?"

And Evans said to the court, quote, "We have never had any evidence that showed anything other than this defendant's guilt."

Evans told the court that all the evidence pointed to Curtis.

But there was evidence that pointed to someone else. The jurors who decided Curtis Flowers' guilt never got to hear it.

If the jurors had heard about Willie James Hemphill, it might have made them question whether all of the evidence really pointed at Curtis and Curtis alone.

It might have made them doubt the case that the D.A. Doug Evans was making. It might have suggested another way that all of these pieces of circumstantial evidence could've fit together.

It might have shown that the investigators had doubt in those early days as to whether Curtis was the one who did it. And if those investigators had doubt, maybe the jurors would too.

Curtis Flowers has been in jail or prison for 21 years. He's been tried six times. One night last summer, I went to talk to a juror from the sixth trial, the latest one. His name is Alexander Robinson. And I asked him a question.

*Madeleine Baran: Do you think that if they had evidence of someone else who could have done it, that that would have been helpful to know?*

*Alexander Robinson: It'd've been different in the jury room. It'd've been different. I don't know how we would've voted, but it would've been different.*

Alexander Robinson said, "It'd've been different in the jury room. I don't know how we would've voted, but it would've been different."

Next week, the final episode of Season Two of In the Dark.

In the Dark is reported and produced by me, Madeleine Baran, senior producer Samara Freemark, producer Natalie Jablonski, associate producer Rehman Tungekar, and reporters Parker Yesko and Will Craft. Additional reporting by Curtis Gilbert.

In the Dark is edited by Catherine Winter. Web editors are Dave Mann and Andy Kruse. The Editor in Chief of APM Reports is Chris Worthington. Original music by Gary Meister and Johnny Vince Evans. This episode was mixed by Corey Schreppel.

To learn more about some of the other alternate suspects in the case, go to our website [inthedarkpodcast.org](http://inthedarkpodcast.org). I also recorded a video tour of the old CorruLite factory so you can see what it was like. Trust me, you'll want to. That's also up on our website, again, that's at [inthedarkpodcast.org](http://inthedarkpodcast.org).